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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE WORLD
SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Consideration by the Commission for Social Development of the World Summit for Social Development and its preparatory process

Note by the Secretariat

At its thirty-third session, held at Vienna from 8 to 17 February 1993, the Commission for Social Development, recalling General Assembly resolution 47/92 on the convening of a World Summit for Social Development, decided to transmit the annex of its resolution 33/1 to the Economic and Social Council at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 1993 and to the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development.

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* A/CONF.166/PC/1.

Annex to resolution 33/1 of the Commission for Social Development

A. Consideration of the agenda for the World Summit for Social Development

1. The Commission for Social Development has given due consideration to the agenda for the World Summit for Social Development at its thirty-third session, as called for in paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 47/92, and has arrived at the conclusion set out below.

2. A detailed definition of the agenda for the Summit, based on the core issues specified in paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 47/92, will be the task of the Preparatory Committee for the Summit. As requested, the Commission has given substantive consideration to the core issues.

3. The Commission is of the view that the agenda for the Summit should adhere strictly to the agreed core issues, as related to the objectives specified in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 47/92.

4. The Commission is of the view that the agenda for, and the outcome of, the Summit should lead to concrete, action-oriented plans and programmes that can be monitored on a continuing basis. In this connection, the Commission recalls the existing instruments agreed upon by intergovernmental bodies, in particular those promoting the well-being of specific social groups. The results of the Summit should enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations system in the sphere of social development and the effective implementation of existing instruments, as appropriate to national circumstances, through, inter alia, standard-setting and heightened efforts to give coherence to disparate social strategies and to develop from them concrete projects and programmes. New approaches should be considered to ensure an appropriate impact and lasting solutions.

5. The Commission is of the view that the Summit should foster a greater understanding of the following:

(a) Social and economic development cannot take place independently of each other and must be integrated;

(b) Social factors must be adequately understood and considered in order to formulate effective economic policies;

(c) Social policies must be formulated in such a way as to ensure that they are economically sustainable;

(d) Social development represents an approach that aims to enhance people's capacity to lead secure lives and to provide them with the conditions necessary for their full participation in society;

(e) Safety net or welfare provisions form one aspect of social development policy. Such provisions, however, should not simply aim at protecting people but should also provide them with opportunities to reduce their vulnerability;

(f) A peaceful, stable and non-discriminatory international environment is essential for social development within nations;

(g) Social development will strengthen international peace and security;

(h) The social, economic and demographic aspects of development are interrelated.

6. In considering the three core issues - the enhancement of social integration, particularly of the more disadvantaged and marginalized groups; alleviation and reduction of poverty; and expansion of productive employment - it should be noted that all are interrelated.

7. In order to promote more effective and nationally appropriate strategies and to enhance the effectiveness of international cooperation in all directions - South-South, North-South and North-North cooperation - the Commission recommends that the Preparatory Committee for the Summit take into particular consideration the elaboration of the three core issues set out below.

1. Social development strategies for the enhancement of social integration

(a) Creating equal access to opportunities and information through the elimination of all forms of discrimination;

(b) Promoting education for all, eradicating illiteracy, particularly among women, and continuing the training of the labour force;

(c) Promoting the role of grass-roots and non-governmental organizations, within the national context, in defining and executing social programmes;

(d) Decentralizing decision-making to encourage more effective and efficient social policy-making and programming and enabling people to participate in the decisions that directly or indirectly affect their lives;

(e) Identifying successful, cost-effective programmes in countries at various levels of development to ensure the full participation of all people in society, especially those who are in situations of particular vulnerability;

(f) Improving social returns by directing spending priorities towards investment that has social multiplier effects - for example, investment in basic education, primary health care and general social services;

(g) Ensuring that public administration is transparent and accountable, and that institutions that deliver services operate efficiently, effectively and responsively to needs;

2. Social development strategies for the alleviation and reduction of poverty

(h) Formulating nationally appropriate, effective and efficient social policies and programmes for the alleviation and reduction of poverty, including extreme poverty, the reduction of vulnerability and thus the enhancement of individual choice and security. These policies and programmes should address the root causes of poverty;

(i) Developing methods for monitoring and evaluating the impact of social policies and programmes that are poverty-focused and methods for assessing the efficacy of the projects included and developing systems for the exchange of views and mutual learning; in particular, such methods and systems should aim at eliminating the impoverishment of women and alleviating its effects;

(j) Encouraging complementary action between public and private providers of social services, in order to encourage a wider choice and more efficient use of resources;

3. Social development strategies for the generation of productive employment

(k) Formulating nationally appropriate, effective and efficient economic and labour market policies to maximize the expansion of productive employment, particularly through the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises;

(l) Enhancing human development through the provision of improved and appropriate education systems, including basic literacy, skills training and health care;

(m) Improving opportunities for workers in all spheres, especially in rural and informal sectors, to increase their productivity through improved access to markets, credit, technology, training and social services;

(n) Defining nationally appropriate policies to ensure workers' rights of organization and free collective bargaining, as well as protecting wages and working hours, rights to social security, non-discriminatory employment practices and labour legislation;

(o) Elaborating ways and means of enhancing the access of women, young and elderly people, persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups to productive employment and to ensure that their contributions are recognized.

8. With reference to paragraphs 15, 16 and 17 of General Assembly resolution 47/92, the Commission welcomed a wide variety of input into the preparations for the Summit. Some representatives stressed the desirability of seeking input from experts and practitioners in the field of social development and indicated the willingness of their Governments to host expert group meetings on the three core issues as elaborated in paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 above. The Preparatory Committee for the Summit would decide to what extent expert group meetings, and the reports they might produce, would be useful to the preparatory process for the Summit. The Commission suggests that the Preparatory Committee give full

consideration to this question, including reporting procedures, at its organizational session in April 1993.

B. Consideration of the question of holding an extraordinary session of the Commission for Social Development in 1994

9. The Commission has given due consideration to the question of holding an extraordinary session dedicated solely to the question of the Summit before the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the Summit in 1994, as called for in paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 47/92.

10. The Commission is conscious of the fact that, in accordance with paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 of General Assembly resolution 47/92, the preparations for the Summit have been entrusted to the Preparatory Committee, to be assisted by an ad hoc secretariat, inter alia, to enable all countries to participate in the preparatory process. To ensure the efficacy and efficiency of the preparatory process and to avoid duplication, the Commission is of the view that it would not be appropriate to convene an extraordinary session.

11. In consideration of General Assembly resolution 47/92 and in view of the specific competence of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council and the Preparatory Committee for the Summit should consider what further role the Commission could play in the preparations for and follow-up to the Summit.

12. In view of the normal schedule for sessions of the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council may wish to consider modifying the date of the next regular session of the Commission.